

TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA.

On the Westminster Meeting—The Defeat of "little Algiers."—The Royal Divorce.—The Dissolution of the Chamber in France.

I have more than once, in my letters to you, pointed out the grand object which the friends of freedom in England have in view; namely, *a reform in the House of Commons*. This has been the great question for more than forty years; and, the point will never be yielded by the reformers. My own opinions upon this subject you have had before. I am now about to lay before you the opinions of the largest Meeting that ever was, perhaps, seen in England. It is said that it consisted of *thirty thousand* persons. I have seen Meetings held at the same place when Mr. Fox was one of the orators, and I am sure I never saw one of those Meetings consisting of more than *five hundred men*. The cause of this wide difference is, that the people, who, in Mr. Fox's time, were the mere instruments of factions, who were the mere many-headed beast, upon which those factions alternately rode into power, are now become enlightened as to their true interests, and they clearly see (their eyes having been opened by suffering) that, unless the power of the borough-mongers be destroyed, complete slavery must be our lot. You will perceive by the following proceedings, which have been published in all the English newspapers, that the true cause of our distresses is clearly understood. You will perceive, that the

real object of the war against the French people; that the nature of the funded debt; that the situation of the finances; that every subject, in short, of great national importance is now well understood. This is a long step in the way of improvement. Until of late years it has been impossible to induce people to reflect on these matters. The picture was held up before them till the painter was ashamed of his importunity. They would not see. They seemed determined to keep their eyes shut. They now are as much determined not to close them. It must be confessed, however, that this victory is less to be ascribed to the powers of reason and of eloquence, than to those of that great teacher, *distress*. But it is no matter in what way the thing may come, so that it come. Throughout the country there are not the same means of collecting people together as exist in Westminster; but, the same sentiments prevail, and I give it as my decided opinion, that in less than two years, a reform of the parliament will take place. If indeed taxes sufficient to supply an Exchequer, which requires 70 millions a year, could still be collected, I should be of a different opinion. But to continue to collect this sum appears to me utterly impossible. You will perceive, that the speakers upon this occasion, in speaking of the national debt, denied that it was *national*. This is an idea, not new, perhaps, to men's minds, but certainly quite new as a topic in the way of speech. A very ticklish topic it is; but, as we have heard so much of *virtual representation*, men may be excused for gliding into the notion of a *virtual debt*. If it be contended, as it is contended, that the Borough of old Sarum, and the other

as the cheaters of the people; as their persecutors and robbers; and yet, when those priests were driven out of France by that very people, who, as we alledged, had been persecuted and robbed by them, we received the priests with open arms, and poured forth execrations on the people. And, what was still more serious, we were taxed with one hand for money to support the Priests, and, with the other hand, for money to make war upon the people! As a nation we may be objects of any thing but of pity. Every man in this country, who, by word or deed, knowing the merits of the case, lent his help to these deeds, merits every species of misery that the human mind or body is capable of feeling. Yes, we have the satisfaction to see that Frenchmen are again forced under the feet of the Bourbons and their Priests; and, if Frenchmen should happen to be equally malignant, they may now have the satisfaction to see that Englishmen are now put up to auction by the overseers of the poor! The French stomach must be very capacious indeed if here be not revenge sufficient to fill it. As if we were to be scourged in the severest manner and in the most appropriate way, upon this occasion, we are now actually receiving *alms* from the Bourbon family. The Duke of Berri not only subscribed his two hundred pounds in the first instance for *our relief*; but continues most generously, to give us fifty pounds *a month*, extracted no doubt from the people of France! If this be not retaliation, I know not what is. The Duke of Berri, as *grand almoner* of the people of France, doles out to us the charitable contributions of a people, whom we thought we had made beggars as well slaves.

When the kings were here, in 1814,

the Nation appeared to be drunk with joy. The pictures of those kings hung upon thousands of bosoms. The stupid and base women flocked by thousands to wave their handkerchiefs in honor of them and their whiskered attendants. Some presented them with rings, others with locks of their hair. The looks of the sons and daughters of corruption were so insolent as almost to provoke blows. Where are now those insolent looks?—Where are now those exulting grins? The Gentlemen and Ladies now begin to be frightened. They appear to smell danger. Where are now all the caresses they had to bestow upon those foreign bands! The very priests whom they so much cherished would now laugh at them. The subscription now made for the relief of this starving people does not amount to half a year's allowance which the parliament made this people pay, for years, for the *relief of French emigrants*! Nay, I believe, that the subscription will not *in the end* amount to so large a sum as that which has been voted for the relief of French emigrants *this very year*!

In taking my leave of the Board of Agriculture, or rather, of the remarks which have grown out of this notice of its conduct, I wish to caution you against being imposed upon by *names*. I have before explained to you all the history and mystery of the *Giffords* and their Reviews. You have now seen what the Board of Agriculture is. Thus, one at a time, fairly and softly, shall you be made fully acquainted with the whole of John Bull's concerns; and if, after that, you suffer yourselves to be duped, the fault will be yours and not mine.

WM. COBBETT.

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Boroughs, have a *right* to chuse the Members to represent the whole of the nation, it would be hard to quarrel with these gentlemen for contending that the persons who return the members have a *right* also to the whole of the debt. If the people at large are denied to share in the chusing of those who *borrow* the money; it would be extremely harsh very severely to censure those who contend, that the people at large ought not to be called upon for the payment of what has been borrowed. It is not long since the Courier newspaper reproached the land-owners with a design to curtail the interest on the debt, and told them, that they had borrowed the money to carry on the war for their own purposes; that they had made the loans in order to prevent their own estates from being taxed; and that they now wanted to get rid of taxation, necessary to pay the interest on those loans. There was a good deal of force in this argument, as far as related to those who really had taken a part in the making of the loans; but the argument was worth not a straw as applied to that great mass of the people, who have had no share whatever, either directly or indirectly, in causing the loans to be made. At any rate, in taking this view of the matter the question of Parliamentary Reform presents itself before us in the clearest light, and in its most striking shape. Here we have a practical illustration of the effect of what is called *virtual representation*, which is the cant phrase of the Borough-mongers and their adherents. If a proposition were to be made in parliament to reduce the interest of the debt, and if I were a member of that parliament, chosen by the people of Westminster, for instance, and never having given my consent to any loan, I should be disposed to take no part whatever in the discussion, and simply to observe, that it is an affair *between the borrower and the lender*. I have not the smallest doubt, that this question will be agitated during the next session of parlia-

ment. It is a question which will force itself forward, and that will not be put aside by any device that can be resorted to. With this preface I shall, without more ceremony, insert the proceedings, at the Westminster Meeting.

Wednesday an unusually numerous and very respectable assemblage of the electors of Westminster, took place at Palace-yard, for the purpose of considering "What was the true cause of the public distress, and what was the proper remedy; as well as to consult on the right means to be adopted for promoting that remedy." At one o'clock, Arthur Morris, Esq. the High Bailiff, appeared on the Hustings, accompanied by Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Cochrane, the Rev. Mr. Parke, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Peter Walker, Mr. Brooks, &c. &c. Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Cochrane and Mr. Hunt were loudly cheered by the assembled multitude, which did not consist of less than 20,000 persons.

The High Bailiff opened the business of the day by briefly stating the purposes for which the Meeting had been called. He had, he observed, received a very long letter from Major Cartwright, on the subject which they had met to take into consideration, that gentleman not being able, in consequence of ill health, to appear on the hustings.

Mr. P. Walker said, if the letter were read, it would be necessary to trespass on the attention of the Meeting for a considerable portion of time. If the assembly were, however, of opinion that it should be read, the gentlemen on the hustings could have no objection.—[Cries of No, no!]

The Rev. Mr. PARKE commenced by lamenting the absence (through indisposition) of that veteran in the cause of Reform, Major Cartwright. That venerable Gentleman had, for a long series of years, exerted himself to ameliorate the condition of his fellow-countrymen; and, like every true patriot, he considered the approbation of his own conscience, and the applause of his fellow citizens, as a sufficient reward for the exertions he had made. The Rev. Gentleman conceived the present to be the most important crisis at which the citizens of Westminster had ever been called on to meet. It was unnecessary for him to tell them that the country was distressed; it was unnecessary for him to describe that distress—unfortunately they were all witnesses of the fact. They saw and felt the misfortunes by which the country was overwhelmed. They were, in truth, spectators of a scene of national ruin. Individuals were daily quitting the country, like so many messengers, to proclaim to the world the distress and poverty of

this once happy land. In the manufacturing towns the inhabitants were collecting together, not to congratulate each other on a flourishing state of affairs, but to march away, in gloomy procession, to the workhouse. They were now no longer able to support themselves, the parish must therefore support them. Were they, the Electors of Westminster, to appear inanimate at such a sight? Were they to sit and weep in silence? Whether they turned to the right hand or to the left, they met calamity beyond description. Misery was growing up before their eyes, and, unless the country prevented it, this fertile island would soon become a barren wilderness; and he need not tell those whom he addressed, that a barren wilderness must be deserted. These things had not come on the country by surprise—the Electors of Westminster had oftentimes met, and had repeatedly warned the country against those circumstances that were closely connected with the present calamity. But, alas! they were not heard; or, if they were heard, their remonstrances were not regarded.—The moment, however, was now arrived, when the Electors of Westminster must think with unanimity, when they must redouble their efforts, when they must unite their exertions, and endeavour to raise a grand barrier, in order to oppose the present system, which aimed at the universal destruction of all that was dear to Englishmen. The present Administration, however deficient in ability, were not at all deficient in political power. If they wanted a calm, they could command it—If they wanted a storm, they could raise it. It was for the people in this exigence of affairs, to make them use their power for the benefit of the country. The national vessel that bore the British flag was over-freighted, and it was for them to call upon those who over-freighted the ship, to throw overboard every thing that was unnecessary, in order that she might ride securely in the harbour of peace. When they were before importuned, Ministers said they would not—no, they would not attempt to steer clear of the shoals that threatened the safety of the national vessel. But it was the bounden duty of the Electors of Westminster, and of every body in the kingdom, to demand that they should lighten the burdens of the vessel; and that every salary unnecessarily paid to a Placeman—that every shilling of profit which a sinecurist could derive from his situation (which was wrung from the bowels of the country) should be thrown overboard; thus, the vessel of the State might be enabled to swim with all her accustomed steadiness and beauty. It was time that the people should consider the bright gems which once ornamented the British Constitution—it was time for them to restore those gems which corruption or folly had

knocked out, and to renew the beauty of that wise system which was the pride of their ancestors. Those gems were the rights which their forefathers possessed, and it was for them to come forward and demand that whatever they had been deprived of should be given back to them. He called on them not to procrastinate a business of such importance; the work of a great nation ought to be done with speed. His object was to impress on their minds the necessity of forceful exertion and unanimous action. They ought to recollect that the eyes of the nation were fixed on the citizens of Westminster, who had frequently given the tone to the ideas of the country. It was their duty not only to meet but to act upon this occasion. Their minds ought to be made up on a subject of so much importance. It was only necessary for him to state, when he pointed out the wretched situation of the country, that the landholders had scarcely enough to pay rent and taxes. How then, he would ask, were the industrious to be employed?—How were the poor to be supported? He should not longer occupy their time, but would proceed to move a Resolution, to the justice of which he was sure they would all subscribe, as it was the emanation of an enlightened understanding. The Rev. Gentleman then proposed the following Resolutions:—

Resolved, That the present unexampled and increasing sufferings in Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce, are not an effect of a sudden transition from war to peace, but of an undermining progressive transition from the Constitutional Liberty of Englishmen, to the abhorrent Despotism of an usurping Borough Faction, with its Taxation without Representation and its Septennial power.

This Resolution was carried with acclamations.

Mr. HUNT addressed the meeting as "Englishmen, Countrymen, and Fellow Citizens," exhorting them to consider the importance of the occasion upon which they were assembled. He had, he said, been selected to move the second Resolution, and he claimed the indulgence of the meeting—he requested its patient attention, while he endeavoured to illustrate the justice and necessity of adopting it. The Worthy Clergyman who preceded him, had dealt much in eloquence and figures; he would, however, offer nothing but plainness and realities. He would not present metaphors to such an assemblage, but express himself with simplicity, and call things by their proper names. The distress of the country was confessedly notorious; that its pressure was admitted as it was felt by all parties, excepting only those who subsisted upon the taxes.—(Applause.)—But even these could not wholly deny the extent of the public suffering, who had occasioned that suffering by their own unexampled delinquency, and all that suffering was notoriously att

butable to the corrupt construction and character of the House of Commons.—(A cry of Hear, hear! and silence, silence!)—Here the Gentleman requested the people not to repeat the word silence, for he observed that in every instance of clamour, the word silence made more noise than any other word whatever.—(A laugh.)—Hr. H. repeated, that the existence of the public distress was now quite undeniable even by those public plunderers, whose misconduct had produced it, and it was equally undeniable that that distress was the result of the late long, bloody, and unnecessary war against the liberty of Englishmen, and of all mankind. For to that war was owing the irredeemable debt and enormous taxation which now bore so severely upon the country, which destroyed its commerce, paralyzed its manufactures, and ruined its agriculture; which left the landlord without rent, the manufacturer without capital or credit, and the mass of the people penniless.—(Applause.)—But yet those who occasioned this scene of universal calamity and want, were heard to boast that this country had acquired immortal honour and glory. But in what did this honour and glory consist? Was it in forcing the Bourbons upon the throne of France, through the power of mercenary armies, and against the will of the French people!—(Applauses.) Was it in reinstating the Pope, or in restoring “Ferdinand, the beloved,” with the Inquisition?—(Hear, hear!) For such was the honour and glory of which the advocates of the war vaunted, and the expences of which this country was condemned to defray. Yes, for all these achievements of honour and glory, John Bull was compelled to pay the piper.—(A laugh, and hear, hear!) But we were told that this honour and glory led to peace. What sort of peace, however, had been concluded? Why, all the amiable Monarchs engaged in the war, had entered into a treaty offensive and defensive, which treaty was, in fact, an unnatural, unholy alliance, a conspiracy of despots, a banditti of sovereigns against the rights and privileges of their own subjects. (Applauses.) The people of this country would recollect that their forefathers, after a stout and manly struggle, succeeded in driving the tyrant of the House of Stuart from the throne, and taking off the head of one of them. Having so done they chose the family of the Guelphs, or as they were called, the House of Brunswick, to succeed them, with which family they entered into a contract, entitled the Act of Settlement, and one of the articles of which contract was, that no placeman or pensioner should be allowed to sit in the people’s House of Parliament. But was not this contract grossly violated? (Hear, hear, hear!) Thus one family commenced its career by slighting that people who had dismissed its predecessors, and hence the country was condemned to endure the mis-

chiefs of a corrupt House of Commons, among the members of which, according to an authentic publication, no less than 200,000*l.* a year of the public money were at present distributed. That corrupt villain of a minister, Sir Robert Walpole, was in the habit of openly and undisguisedly bribing the members of the House of Commons, by directly giving away the public money, or placing 500*l.* under the plate of a member at a dinner table. But a different practice had since obtained. According to the system of Pitt and Fox, for they were both alike (No, no, exclaimed several voices), great prizes were now held out to the supporters of government. For instance, Mr. Horner, as he observed on a former occasion, had 2000*l.* a year. Mr. Ponsonby, 4000*l.* a year, that useful public man (Lord Arden) no less than 38,000*l.* a year, and Lord Camden, 39,000*l.* Thus was the public money distributed under the improved system of modern times, and thus parliament was corrupted—thus the faction of borough mongers was rewarded out of the spoils of the public, and this system was naturally sanctioned by the members of that faction who annually assembled over the way, but not till night.—(A laugh)—

“For those whose deeds are evil court the night,
“As deeds of darkness shun the test of light.”

But such must be the conduct of those who composed that Assembly, while the present vicious system of our representation was allowed to continue. A majority could always be had in such an assembly, and what else could be expected while the Members of that Assembly were permitted to divide among themselves or their friends the spoils which they exacted from the people, while, as in the case of Lords Arden and Camden, they sanctioned the grant of 38,000*l.* a year to men for doing nothing!—(Hear, hear, hear!)—Such grants were obviously scandalous as well to those who gave as to those who received them. For was it not a gross injustice that one of those state paupers, one of those sturdy beggars, should, for doing nothing, receive more than the annual half pay of 500 Lieutenants of the navy, who had fought and bled for their country.—(Loud applauses.)—Thus an important branch of the public service was neglected, while a worthless individual received 38,000*l.* a year [Applauses.] Here Mr. H. adverting to the remark of the worthy Clergyman who preceded him, that the people declined to support Major Cartwright, denied that the charge was just; for the people were never found to desert their real friends. Who, for instance, could doubt that they would ever decline to stand by the Hon. Baronet near them? [Applauses.] It was true, while the people stood by their real friends, they were not to be



gulled by all who pretended to befriend them. It was not the time for lawyers to expect to mount into Attorney-Generals on the backs of the people; if such was the expectation of any man, he would be disappointed. The people had seen by woeful experience, that the promises of party men were not to be relied on. He had before observed, that the Pitt and Fox systems were both alike—a gentleman behind him had interrupted him, one he supposed attached to the Foxites, who thought it was injudicious that truth should be spoken. This he was persuaded was not the opinion of the people—if they submitted to such a base idea they would deserve the condition to which they were reduced. He had always been in the habit of telling truth to the people. Some time ago, to be sure, it was not so well received as it had lately been. The people were not then so well acquainted with the nature of sinecures. He had stuck up twenty names of them at Bristol some years ago, since which time very general knowledge on that subject was spreading through the kingdom. As he was passing through the town of Bagshot the other day, an honest tradesman, a very loyal man, who was for war and taxes, and every thing loyal, said to him, “what you said to the Common Hall the other day was very true; we had our little meeting in this parish, and we find the man whom you call your old friend the Marquis Camden has received more of the taxes in a year than this parish has paid in the last twenty years.” He had heard some time ago from a friend to the system—“What are these sinecures—they are but flea-bites.” It was true, a flea-bite in itself was not much—it was only a nasty, dirty, shabby blotch; but we were flea-bitten from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, and unless some effectual remedy was found, such a corruption would be introduced into the system, that the body would be destroyed. It was the business of the meeting to find a remedy. The remedy was this—let the borough mongers give up to the people its rights before it was too late. This result was not to be hoped except from the united voice of such meetings as the present. The Resolution which he was to submit to them was, that a Petition be presented to the Prince Regent to call the Parliament together, once more to receive their Petition of Right to listen to the prayers of the people, and determine whether they would give the people justice, or wait till they took it—(Loud applause)—At this moment, while the army was kept up, decked out with feathers and tippets, and all sorts of tawdry nonsense in the German style, the navy was dismantled, and hundreds of deserving Lieutenants discharged on four shillings a day, while many thousand Midshipmen had not a farthing. He had

lately seen many of them hay-making at two shillings a day for the farmers, rather than go to the workhouse, and at present actually many were employed picking hops in the gardens in Kent.—While these deserving men were making such exertions to avoid the shame of pauperism, what should we say to the sturdy beggars who were enjoying such sums without ever having done the least service to the country? What should we say, when the public money was lavished on Mrs. Fox and Lady Grenville, and the amiable Misses Hunn, and old Mother Hunn—(a laugh, and applause)—They were going to address the Prince Regent, and when the Petition was read, they would see that it was couched in temperate, yet in manly language; it was to require that those who had brought the country into its distresses, should find some means to bring them out—(applause). They should call upon the Prince Regent’s advisers (if he had any responsible advisers), they should call upon Castlereagh to caution the Prince how he refused to listen to the voice of the people, though Lord Castlereagh’s courage and impudence was equal to any thing; but if he had a particle of honesty, if he had any regard for his own carcass, he would advise his Royal Master to remember the fate of the Stuarts—(applause)—to call to mind the fate of Charles I. on the scaffold at Whitehall. The cause why that Monarch so justly lost his head was, that he had refused to listen to the prayers of the people. The want of a free communication with the people was the reason that his whole family was hereafter expelled from the throne. The people are not less willing and ready to do themselves justice than they were in those days. Let the Prince Regent fly back from his tour to listen to the petitions of those whom he called his subjects. Let the Parliament be told that the people were not less able and willing to reform their Government than in those days. We had been told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that arch hypocrite Wilberforce (who was so long lamenting the situation of the black slaves, while he was promoting white slavery) that we had been brought into our present condition by a sudden transition from war to peace. This was a poor attempt at delusion.—The truth was, that the people were overwhelmed with taxation, which they were not able to bear. This was a point beyond which the House of Commons could not go. They might send an armed force to disperse that constitutional assembly, but they could not take money out of the pockets of those who had none to pay.—(Applause.)—Though a Standing Army was kept up to preserve the peace—to keep the people of Ireland in their houses from sun-set to sun-

rise, to raise war taxes in the time of peace—there was one thing of which he was certain, that Englishmen, however Germanized in dress, would never be found to turn their arms against their fellow-subjects—he had not the least doubt of that; but if he had, he should not the less stand up for the undoubted rights of the people, as it was his duty to do.—He then moved—

“That whether we direct our eyes to the Faction’s grand harvest—War,—to a profligate expenditure in useless places, to exorbitant salaries for nominal services, to a devouring and insatiable Civil List, to a band of Court hirelings in the House of Commons holding enormous emoluments, to the organization of a Corps of direct Plunderers, denominated Sinecurists, or to an immense Standing Army in Peace for destroying our liberties; we see in the whole body, and in every feature of this system, the strongest proofs, and clearest illustrations, of the imperious necessity of a radical reform in the National Representation; without which, inevitable ruin and slavery must be our country’s fate.”—This Resolution was put and carried unanimously.—Mr. Walker said, that before he proceeded to make any remarks, he should read the Resolution which he had been selected to propose.—“That advert-
ing to Fact, we find that, for a period exceeding 200 years, antecedent to the reign of King William, while our Law was a stranger to Parliaments of a continuance exceeding one year, our country was equally a stranger to the curse of a National Debt.”—This was a mere matter of historical fact, but which explained one of the most material grievances under which the people laboured. If any set of men had the power of sitting in Parliament for seven years, they had, as Junius so forcibly expressed it, six years to sin in, and the seventh to make atonement. If the representatives of the people were obliged to recur at the end of the year to those who put them in that situation, they would be much more cautious how they exercised the power, with which they were entrusted. The present state of the representation in that respect was one of the evils which with accelerated and accumulated force pressed down the country, but which would not, he hoped, have any effect to lower the spirit of the people of Westminster. All arguments which did not seek in our constitution the source of our grievances, were merely delusive. Among other misrepresentations of our present distresses, was the Resolution of the London Tavern meeting, that the cause of them was the transition from war to peace. That brave and much injured Nobleman, their Representative, among the various proofs he had given of his valour, had never done

any thing which so much redounded to his credit, as the motion which he there made. Basque Roads would sink in the comparison with it, though the valour of his achievement was rendered more illustrious by the appropriation of the prize money, which he acquired from it, to the purposes of general education. If it was said that the transition from war to peace was the cause, why not take half the corn of the farmers and throw it into the sea, and raise taxes to pay them for it? Why not alter the currency of the country, and lower its value, in order to pay the national debt? Was it not known, that by a *hocus pocus* the value of the national currency was lowered, and in consequence of that change, the salaries of placemen were raised to meet it? But now when the value of money was again increased, they had the impudence to go on receiving their advanced wages. This was as base a juggle as was ever attempted to be passed off on any people. The pensioners and placemen, whose salaries were raised when the Bank note was worth only 14s. continued to receive the same number of notes when each was worth twenty shillings. It would take up too much time to go at large into this subject; but this was evident, that when the country was pressed down by the burden of taxation, those whose salaries had been lately increased should give up that increase—that those sinecures and pensions which had not been bestowed to reward real service, or in lieu of professional emoluments which had been abandoned, should be abolished—that contractors should give up their immense profits. A committee of a reformed House of Commons would be able to make reductions, which would astonish those who were only accustomed to modern retrenchment. As a step to Reform, he trusted the meeting would agree to the Resolution. The parliament, which had first been annual, had voted itself triennial, it then voted itself septennial, and, if this was suffered, it might vote itself perpetual.—[Applause.]—The Resolution was then put and carried unanimously. Mr. Walker then successively moved the following Resolutions:—
“That we cannot without horror contemplate the melancholy contrast, that, in little more than a twelfth part of a like period of time, Parliaments ‘of too long continuance’ have incurred a debt utterly unredeemable; the very interest of which inflicts on us the torture of a taxation exceeding 45 millions a year, exclusive of the extravagant expence of a corrupt government; and that both together exceed 70 millions a-year; a taxation under which the nation groans with unspeakable misery.—That to obtain relief from their present distress and to prevent for ever a return, it is

necessary the people, in their respective counties, cities, towns, and villages, should cordially co-operate in the measures adopted by the cities of London and Westminster, for the salvation of their country in firmly and perseveringly claiming by petition their right to a real representation annually elected.—That a petition be presented to the Prince Regent, beseeching him to take into his consideration the sufferings of his industrious and patient people—and praying that he will be pleased forthwith to cause the parliament to be assembled, and to recommend to them, in the most urgent manner, to reduce the army, to abolish all sinecures, pensions, grants, and emoluments not merited by public services: and to listen, before it be too late, to those repeated prayers of the people for being restored to their undoubted right of choosing their own representatives.—That a Petition founded on the foregoing Resolutions be now read.”

The following Petition was then read by Mr. Cleary, and received with great applause:

TO THE REGENT.

The Petition of the Inhabitant Household-ers of the City and Liberties of Westminster.

“May it please your Royal Highness—In the midst of the unexampled distress which now unhappily afflicts alike our agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, we beg leave to approach your Royal Highness, and to request, nay implore, your Royal Highness’s most serious and attentive consideration to the only means of averting those calamities, which are now so deeply felt and so awfully portentous. We confide in the wisdom and discernment of your Royal Highness, that you clearly perceive the sinister ends of those persons who have insulted the understanding of the nation, by attributing its sufferings to a more sudden transition from War to Peace: and the more so, because the true cause of this suffering and distress is, at length, universally known throughout the kingdom, namely, an undermining progressive transition from the Constitutional Liberty of Englishmen to the abhorrent despotism of an usurping Borough Faction; a Faction who holds the crown, as well as the lives, the liberty, and the property of the people under their despotic will and controul.—For, your Royal Highness is aware, from your constitutional knowledge, that a people who are subject to Legislators over whose appointment they have neither power nor influence, are politically enslaved, and their property is not safe:—That, unfortunately the inroads made on our freedom placed at the command of this Faction, the physical strength of the state, the public purse, and a venal press:—And that they were not wanting in sagacity to see how they could at once prevent a Parliamentary Reform and secure

their oligarchical sway.—As the public expenditure increased, so increased their power. In proportion as the nation was drained, they were enriched. As the impoverished people were exhausted, the wealth and splendour of these enemies were augmented.—The criminality of these authors of the late war your Royal Highness can now truly estimate from a review of the objects it has accomplished and the effects it has produced.—Instructed by calamity, experience, and reflection, we beg to solicit your Royal Highness’s attention to the alacrity with which this Faction, merely to promote their own corrupt interests, against every interest of their country and of mankind, became also a War Faction.—With what wickedness they plunged and continued the nation in sanguinary, unjust, and protracted conflicts, for destroying the liberties of other countries, and establishing bigotry, intolerance, and despotism all over the world. With what specious and hollow pretexts they heaped on the nation, from time to time, a load of Debt amounting to a thousand millions sterling; besides an intolerable taxation in time of peace, of more than seventy millions annually; which has ruined our Agriculture, closed our mines, destroyed our manufactures, paralyzed our commerce, and brought misery, degradation, and pauperism, on this once free and happy people:—While, to extend, to defend, and to fortify their usurpation, the Faction still countenance and promote a profligate and wasteful expenditure in useless places—exorbitant salaries for nominal services—an enormous and insatiable Civil List,—an organised corps of direct plunderers, denominated sinecurists, an immense Standing Army in peace, destructive of the people’s liberties, and, in short, a system of corruption, the whole body of which is so glaring, as to afford the strongest lights, and clearest illustrations of the inevitable ruin and slavery which awaits our country; unless prevented by the force of the wisdom, the virtue, and the justice we now invoke at your Royal Highness’s hands, towards this much injured and suffering nation. Wherefore, seeing the dire necessity of speedy and effectual relief, we earnestly pray your Royal Highness forthwith to assemble Parliament, and by a Gracious Message from the Throne, which cannot fail to be hailed by the People with the most unanimous and heartfelt joy and gratitude, strongly to recommend measures to be taken to enforce the most prompt and rigid economy in every department of the Public Expenditure, by the reduction of the army, the abolition of all useless places, sinecures, and pensions, unmerited by, or unproportioned to, public service. And, also seeing that the calamities which now oppress us, have all been the immediate offspring of political vices, not corrected by constitutional counsels; of the panderism of placemen and avarice of jobbers, not controuled by a free Parliament; we, above all, most earnestly pray your Royal Highness to urge both Houses to join your Royal Highness’s

restoring to the people, before it be too late, the most essential of all their rights, and without which all else is delusion, the right of freely, equally, and annually electing their own Representatives. And your Petitioners will ever pray."

Mr. WALKER then moved the following, which was unanimously agreed to:—"That the Petition now read be adopted and signed on behalf of this Meeting, by the High Bailiff and twelve inhabitant householders, and that the same be, as early as possible, presented to the Prince Regent by the High Bailiff, accompanied by our Representatives, Sir Francis Burdett and Lord Cochrane."

Mr. ADAMS moved—"That the Thanks of this Meeting are cordially rendered to our Representative, Sir Francis Burdett, for his steady adherence to the true principles of the constitution, and his resistance to political abuses."—[This motion was received with loud and long continued applauses.]

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, after the acclamations had subsided, said it was most gratifying to him to receive the approbation of so very numerous and respectable a Meeting of his constituents. That Meeting, so large and so well attended, showed that a proper spirit existed in the people of Westminster at least. He trusted, however, that the same spirit existed elsewhere, and that in every part of the kingdom the conduct of the people would be in unison with that of the citizens of Westminster. It was only by the union of the people throughout the country, that they could hope to succeed at last. They ought always to bear in mind, that their enemy was powerful and well entrenched—entrenched behind forms of law and rows of bayonets. United as they were with their fellow citizens of London, their cause was still hopeless without a union among Englishmen of every denomination, who did not wish to see their liberties trampled on—but who wished to regain those rights, which were as clearly pointed out by the constitution, as the corruption of the pretended House of Commons was in practice. [Applause.] After what had been said, so fully and ably, by those Gentlemen who preceded him, on the subject of their grievances—and especially after the long experience which they had had of the evils which had come upon him—evils which he had all along predicted to them, and which he believed they had sense enough to see, though they had not power to prevent—he should not now occupy any portion of their time; but he felt it his duty, as one of their representatives, to state to them, at a moment so critical as the present, the truth as strongly, though he might not be able to do so as forcibly as those gentlemen. He trusted they would not allow themselves to be led astray by sham pretences; but that they would look to the real cause of their grievances, and the best means of giving effect to the remedy. The real cause of all their sufferings was a corrupt

House of Commons. (Applause.) The corruption of that house had been openly avowed in it, and stated to be as clear as the sun at noon day. This avowal shocked and disgusted the speaker of that House—innocent as he would seem to be of such practices—who declared that, at the bare mention of them, the hair of their forefathers would have stood on end. But he (Sir Francis Burdett) would have added, that it would have made their swords start from their scabbards, and that they would not have endured it (Applause.)—It would be no easy matter for them to recover their rights, surrounded as they were by bayonets, and with barracks in every corner—for there were barracks in town, in Hyde Park, and at Woolwich, and lines at Chatham. Government were strongly entrenched behind, and supported by military power. The task was one which would require all their efforts. There was but one way open to them, and that was so humble, that even the worm when trod on, if it could speak, would say, "tread on me no more." Still, however, if the voice of the sufferers was strongly raised, though they were unarmed, they would have no reason to fear; for to the oppressor, next to force, nothing was so terrible as the voice of the oppressed (Applause.) The glory which had been acquired by our late triumphs to the rulers of John Bull, had been well illustrated by a gentleman who preceded him; their glory was our degradation—their success, our overthrow. With regard to what was called the national debt, he contended that it was not a national debt, but the debt of the oligarchy who contracted it; they had no right to pledge the property and industry of the country for any such debt—and for what? To put down liberty all over the world, to restore the Bourbons, the Pope, and the Inquisition, and to disgrace the character of England (Applause.) A more fatal stain was never cast on this country, than when, in violation of treaty, Marshal Ney was shot at Paris. Look at the conduct of ministers, and they would see that they had had, in the whole of their course, but one object—the establishment of despotism abroad, from a fear of reform at home (Applause.) The late war was undertaken not from any of the causes given out, but to prevent the people of England from recovering their constitutional rights. Most of them had seen the play of Catharine and Petruchio. In that play when Petruchio wished to subdue the spirit of his high-minded lady, he had recourse to starvation. It had in like manner been attempted to subdue the spirit of the people of this country by starvation. Millions of men, however, would never allow themselves to be starved in this manner, but would turn upon and overthrow those who attempted their destruction. In the attempted starvation of Catharine, when she was asked what she thought of a nice neat's tongue, she answered that she should like it very well. She was then asked what she thought of beef and mustard—she said she liked it very well. She was next asked, if she liked the beef without the mustard—this also

went down. But when she was asked what she thought of the mustard without the beef, the poor lady lost all patience, and beat the impudent servant out of the room (Laughing.) The people of England, when told of a constitution, in which a King, a House of Lords, and House of Commons returned by the people, served to balance each, and to prevent each other from running into excess, would say at once that is what we delight in; but a constitution, without the people having any share in it, was the mustard without the beef (Loud applause.)—Their oppressors treated them as the Pope did the Protestants, anathematising them, and cramming Catholicism down their throats, and condemning all who stood out to the stake. When that able and honest Englishman, John Horne Tooke, endeavoured in former times to make them acquainted with their rights, he underwent for so doing an attack against his life. Those who endeavoured to enlighten the people, or to support their cause, were assailed in a thousand ways. Corruption had a thousand hooks to catch hold of a man—a man would suddenly find his affairs fall off, without knowing how—there was no sort of attack which a man had not to dread. The system of oligarchy had a hundred hands, one of which it put into every man's pocket. It rejected nothing however common. There was nothing from the cobweb down to the block, which was not caught in its net. An oligarchical House of Commons trampled equally on the Crown and the people. How far the Crown might be compensated in the disposal of the money wrung from the people was a question he would not touch; but the people could have no compensation. Corruption could only exist for the benefit of a few against the many. The people could not be corrupted—it was partial and individual interests only which could be corrupted—it was a solecism to say that the whole people could be corrupted. Mr. Horne Tooke wished to be called to the bar, but they would not allow him to be called; they knew that the people would always have an unfeared and uncorrupted lawyer. In a petition which he presented to the House of Commons, he stated that seats were bought and sold like stalls in Smithfield. The practice, though carried on as much as now, was not then openly avowed, and the statement was new; but now there was not a common woman who did not know it. The people had borne their sufferings so long, that their resistance was like that of the anvil to the hammer. But there was a bound beyond which taxation could not be continued, and this bound we had passed. This excessive taxation was the proximate cause of the present distresses of the people. The question now was, whether this distressed people should continue to pay taxes in order to support the pride and insolence of the great families of this country, who were quartered on the public. If the causes of our distresses was so apparent, the remedy was as apparent—it was nothing

else but getting rid of this taxation, and taking such measures as should prevent a recurrence of the same evils. When he saw stated in the newspapers that poor people had their beds taken from under them for sums such as 40s. on account of taxes, he could not help asking what enemy would be so cruel as to take this from them;—No enemy could indeed be more cruel. This was a system of plunder and tyranny, and not of taxation. The proximate cause of these distresses was taxation, but the remote cause was the oligarchy who ruled the country, and who fattened on its distresses. The labourer was worthy of his hire; and the more vile and dirty work there was to perform, the higher would be the reward. The remedy was plain, and the mode of accomplishment could only be by Meetings such as that he saw, by which the eyes of the people were opened, and where they could interchange their sentiments, and co-operate in obtaining a reform in the representation. He trusted and hoped there would be meetings in every great town in England. Nothing more was required than that they should open their eyes. They could all of them see Westminster Abbey when standing in Palace-yard—and they could all of them, in like manner, see if they were not blinder than that, what was the cause of the distresses of the country. The Honourable Baronet, in illustration of the cruelty of the Pitt system, mentioned the case of Lemaitre, a young man shut up without trial for seven years in Cold Bath-fields, a period which might be called the destruction of a whole life. He was sorry to observe, that so few of the great as they were called, appeared disposed to come forward at the present crisis. He would venture to say, however, that if they did not exert their influence to direct the public feeling in a salutary manner, they would soon find that they were unable to controul the consequences that must inevitably ensue. He would only add, that he should with pleasure, present a petition to the Prince Regent, and he trusted he should have others of a similar nature to present, in his place in parliament. It was thus only that the people of England could recover the constitution which they had lost, and that they could obtain real retrenchment. All their evils had originated in the present corrupt state of the House of Commons; but he was wrong in so denominating it; it was not a House of Commons in the constitutional sense of the word: it was nothing more than a Chamber of Borough-mongers, a vile oligarchical faction. As to the subscription which had been opened, he did not anticipate much benefit from it. The Duke de Berri, to be sure, was a very liberal contributor, but if he and his family could pay their debts to this country; if they would refund what had been lavished upon Priests and Popes; and if too the different crowned heads of Europe would pay their debts into the bargain, then indeed some real substantial relief might be affor

(Applause.) Instead of this, however, what had been done? No attempt was made to obtain for this country its just due. On the contrary, Lord Castlereagh, who had already ruined his own country, and was trying all in his power to ruin this, had studiously neglected all its interests in the various treaties he had concluded. He was so much absorbed in favour of Princes and despots, that he never once thought of obtaining any compensation for the sacrifices which had been made, nor even of securing commercial privileges which it might have been expected would not wholly have escaped him. Before he concluded, he wished to say a few words respecting the Meeting which had been held at the City of London Tavern. Lord Cochrane appeared there most unexpectedly, and threw the gentlemen who were assembled into as much consternation and confusion, as when he cast his shells and bombs into the castle of Rosas. (Applause.) They had all heard, in the days of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, much talk about the domestic enemies of the country; in his opinion, when Lord Cochrane went to the City of London Tavern, he got as successfully amongst the domestic enemies of the country as ever he had done amongst its foreign ones. (Applause.) Having now discharged that debt of gratitude to Lord Cochrane for his conduct that day, a debt which he thought was owing to him from every honest man in England, he should take his leave of the present Meeting with heartfelt satisfaction; he was glad to see them so alive to the real cause of the evils which now oppressed the country, and so determined, he hoped to obtain redress from them. If they persevered, they would succeed; if they relaxed in their efforts, this country would inevitably become the most enslaved and most plundered of any in Europe. (Applause.)

Mr. PARKS then came forward and moved the tenth Resolution:—"That our thanks are given to the Right Hon. Lord Cochrane for his parliamentary conduct, and particularly for his having at a meeting held at the City of London Tavern, on the 17th of July last, (his Royal Highness the Duke of York in the Chair) exposed and defeated the insidious attempt then and there made falsely to attribute the present sufferings of the nation to a mere transition from war to peace."

LORD COCHRANE said, that the thanks of so large a portion of the enlightened inhabitants of Westminster was to him more pleasing than any honour which government could bestow. To the breast of any man of feeling, what he (Lord C.) had just heard was more grateful than any praise which could come from the mouth of a corrupt minister. They had met that day for the purpose of endeavouring to strike at the great root of all their calamities—the present state of representation. They had met for the purpose of raising their voices to the throne, and calling for a reform in the Commons House of

Parliament, and such a reform as could alone save a sinking country. If the meeting would turn their eyes to the other side of the water; if they would look at France, they would find that a reform of parliament could be made without any revolution. They would find by the papers of the day, that a reform had been made in the representation of the French people; but it was such a one as better suited the views of the government than promoted the liberty of the people. It was such a reform as lessened the number of national representatives, and rendered the remainder more easy to be corrupted. [Hear, hear.] If a reform were really intended, the whole of the people should have got that which was their right—the privilege of voting; but this was confined to a few electoral Colleges, who might be well compared to our corrupt close Boroughs here. But this conduct could not be fairly charged on France; it was the fault of the faction at home. It was to them that all the calamities which France suffered were to be traced. It was indeed too much the fashion to blame France and Spain for what was done there; but the blame should attach to those who placed such governments over those nations without making a single struggle for the people. [Hear, hear.] He thought that they who called the meeting were entitled to thanks. He approved of that part of their proceedings which proposed a petition to the Prince Regent; but with regard to the others, he thought that measures of a different kind should be pursued. He had not been aware of the resolutions which the committee had intended to submit, having arrived in town only yesterday for the purpose of being present at the meeting; but he had drawn up two resolutions, which he had intended to submit, but which he should now only read as part of his speech. His Lordship then read the two following Resolutions:—

"That it is the opinion of this meeting, that all the counties, and all unrepresented, and all misrepresented cities and towns in the United Kingdom, ought to prepare their respective remonstrances against the present partial system of representation, and corrupt state of the Commons House of Parliament, prior to the day on which that house shall next assemble; and that two or more deputies out of every county, and every such city and town, shall be appointed to convey such remonstrances to the door of that House, on that day; to the end that such remonstrances may be simultaneously presented to the said House, by some one or more of the members thereof then assembled; and in order that the manner in which the House shall receive and dispose of such remonstrances may be reported by the deputies to their constituents."

"That this meeting do now adjourn to the first day of the next meeting of parliament, and be then and here holden."

It would be useless for the people to send a petition, which would be carelessly read by the clerk at the table, while the whole bench of sinecurists

were talking so loud, that it could not be heard, even by those who wished to attend to it. If the people did not do something more effectual than sending skins of parchment to parliament, their complaints would not be attended to. They should have some member to present their petition, and at the same time to move that some of those deputies from counties, &c. should be called in for the purpose of being examined as to the pressure and extent of the grievances of which they complained. There was no doubt but many palliatives would be proposed and suggested, for the purpose of diverting the attention of the people from the prosecution of their right. They had Saving Banks proposed to them, when they had nothing to save, and they would have something else mentioned to divert their attention. But he (Lord Cochrane) cautioned them how they suffered themselves to be led away from their purpose. How they hearkened to any public prosecutions of illustrious persons, or the evidence of any perjured Italian witnesses. The evils which surrounded them were great and numerous, and it would require more than wilful blindness not to perceive them. They were deeply and severely felt by every useful class of the community, and it required all their exertions to struggle against them, and against those men who still supported their continuance. It had been mentioned by him (Lord C.) on another occasion, and in another place, that a reduction should be made of the interest of the funds, that opinion had been since opposed, but he contended that such a reduction was not only necessary, but just, for it should be remembered, that at the time those contracts were made, the quartern loaf was sold for eighteenpence, and now it could be had for much less than that. It should be considered, that the high prices then offered to government contractors, were in consequence of that high price of every necessary of life, which now no longer existed. It would not therefore be unjust, that the present high rate should be reduced. The subscription which had commenced, would, he supposed, still be held up as a remedy for all the distresses of the people, but he denied that it would be so. He had calculated the amount of that subscription, and the relief which it could afford to the great number who were now in want of it. The result of that calculation was, that it would just give every pauper in the country one penny roll, and a pint of porter. [Hear, hear, hear.] Yet this was the great relief, the universal remedy by which the authors of the present distress sought to appease the people's wrath, and repress their just complaints. [Hear, hear.] To this very great sum which had been yet got together, he begged to mention in what proportion some of those who lived by some of the causes of the present calamities, contributed. George Rose was one of the greatest contributors, [hear] for he had given just four farthings and a fraction in the pound, out of

the vast sums which he received from the public. Marquis Camden paid just three farthings in the pound, out of his share. Lord Arden a fraction more. His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury paid three farthings in the pound. The Duke of Grafton, who, let it be observed, had kept out of the way on the occasion of the meeting in the City, lest he should be publicly called upon for his proper share, and who last year had actually sold one of his sinecures to government for 86,400l. 7s.—this same Marquis gave out of what he received from the public, about sixteen-seventeenths of a farthing in the pound. [Hear, hear, hear.] He (Lord C.) hoped, that if any of these gentlemen should ever have occasion to apply to the country, it would treat them, as they had treated it. The Meeting had been told, that there really was no national debt; it was true, the debt was not a national one, it was the debt of the oligarchy which sat in that house opposite (pointing towards the House of Commons.) It was their debt, and it would be but justice to make them pay it. They had, or wished to have, a great share of power over the country, and they ought to pay for it by discharging that debt by which they had procured it. The state of the country was such, that it could not bear any longer the heavy load of taxation under which it had long been sinking; its distress could not be denied even by those who wished so to do; and here he could not but observe, that a Report on the State of the country was some time ago printed, a few numbers published; but the government, fearing to let the terrible but true picture, which was there drawn up, go forth to the public, had the work immediately suppressed. Such then was the condition of the country; and it was only by the most active and persevering exertions of the people that any proper remedy could be applied. He trusted they would remember this, and he hoped he should meet them on the first day of the next session of parliament, when there would be no fear of a mob, and when the streets would be lined with the troops which are usually brought out on such occasions. He hoped they would come and see how their petitions would be received, and that no persecutions of illustrious princesses would divert their attention from their great object. If they acted unanimously, they would shew to any contemptible ministers, or any other set of men who wished to deal unjustly with them, that the attempt must be fruitless. He trusted that the common-place charge of being innovators would not deter them. It was not the people who were innovators; they only were such who had diverted all the rights of the people from their natural source. His Lordship concluded, amidst loud and continued cheers, by thanking the meeting for the attention with which they had heard him.

Mr. WALKER then proposed the 11th Resolution—

“ That the thanks of this meeting are due, and

are hereby given to Major Cartwright, for his more than 39 years' steady and persevering exertion in the cause of the people."—This was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. WADDINGTON proposed that the thanks of the meeting should be given to Mr. Hunt for his laborious and continued exertions in the cause of the people.—Mr. W. stated that he had been 700 miles through the country, and that no tongue could tell or describe the misery which he had witnessed. In one place 400 men, who had been farmers and manufacturers, might be seen walking two and two to the workhouse (Hear, hear); and in Manchester alone, 20 or 30,000 persons were unemployed.

The resolution of thanks to Mr. Hunt was seconded by a gentleman, whose name we could not learn. He stated that there was no man on the hustings more obnoxious to government than Mr. Hunt; and that when he had offered himself as a candidate at Bristol, they had done every thing in their power to prevent his election.

The question was then put and carried.

Mr. HUNT observed, that it was not in the contemplation of the committee to return thanks to him; but at the same time he should ever consider the thanks of so large and respectable a portion of the citizens of Westminster as the greatest honour which could be bestowed upon him. He had lived for twenty years in the cause of the people; and he believed he might safely assert that there was no man in the country, with the exception of the Hon. Baronet near him (Sir F. Burdett), who had been so much abused by the venal press of the country. The Editor of a morning paper had the audacity, in a paragraph, in which he noticed the Meeting at Guildhall, to call the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and the Livery, assembled on that occasion, a set of ruthless ragamuffins. So! it becomes only the well-bred and the classical to meet and remonstrate with his Majesty's Government on the vital affairs of the State! and where others presume to advance upon the arena of debate, these delicate and susceptible gentry cannot subject their nerves to a mixture with the vile effluvia and rude phrases of the trading class of the community! Why the men who thus complain are precisely those who suffer the most from the ruinous policy complained of! The lightning of revolutions may first strike the most elevated objects; but the desolating tide of poverty and distress, engulph as its first victims the humble and the ignorant, in its overwhelming ruin. The learned and elaborate declaimer, with his "fair round belly," and rounder period, and his "good set terms," is the same to the practical tradesman of the middle classes, as the heroic drama, with its canvas skies and pasteboard cities, is to real life. What! we must wait while the titled scholar polishes his "rhapsody of words;"

or the man of diminutive stature, who cannot stand his depth of distress, and who has exhausted himself in stemming the current, must drown in the good-mannered folly of giving his neighbour of six feet in height the precedence of his complaint! It is the sturdy citizen, and not the effeminate student, or indolent man of wealth, who effect all the great and wholesome changes in nations. There was one subject—the Army Estimates—on which he (Mr Hunt) wished to say a word. Those estimates were sometimes 29 millions, and this year they were 20 millions; but the fact was, that the real pay which the troops received did not amount to more than four millions; and not less than 16 millions were shared by Borough-mongers and their hangers-on. The pay and clothing of 150,000 men did not amount to more than 2,775,800*l.* Let not then the army be talked of as the cause of all, or even a great portion of the public distress; for the whole of the troops, officers, and men, might be discharged on full pay, and the people might still save 10 millions a year (Hear, hear.)

It was then proposed "That the thanks of this meeting are rendered to Arthur Morris, Esq. High Bailiff, for his prompt compliance with the request of the Inhabitant Householders in calling this meeting, and for the propriety of his conduct in the chair." This Resolution was carried unanimously.—The High Bailiff returned thanks in a few words, and the meeting adjourned.

"*Little Algiers*," as you call it (for what reason you best know) has been defeated to the entire satisfaction of every friend of freedom in England. The task was very easy, it appears; but it will form a subject of empty boasting in this country as long as people are able to endure it. Lord Exmouth says, in his dispatch, that the event has produced gratitude and joy in his mind; that it will never cease to be a source of delight and heartfelt comfort to him to have been one of the humble instruments in the hands of divine providence for destroying for ever the insufferable and horrid system of *Christian slavery*; that the government of Algiers was cruel and ferocious, &c. Lord Exmouth then takes occasion to speak of the *firmness and wisdom of his Majesty's government and of the vigour of their measures*. It is hard to conceive what business Lord Exmouth had to in-

introduce an observation like this into a dispatch addressed to Lawyer Croker, to be laid before the Lords of the Admiralty. But, able seaman as his Lordship is, he is a much more able courtier; and, perhaps, of all the men who have discovered talent of this kind, during the last thirty years, none have succeeded so completely as himself. At the time, when his old patron, Lord St. Vincent, was hard pushed * * * * *

But with regard to his Lordship's professed hatred of the Tyranny of the Algerines, though I fully agree with him in opinion, and though my joy is quite as great as his that the barbarians have been punished, I cannot so easily forget, perhaps, that these bloody ruffians, who might at any hour, within the last fifty years, have been chastised and their depredations put an end to by the little finger of England; I cannot so easily forget, that this little finger has never been laid upon them before, but, that on the contrary, they have been living in a state of *friendship* with our government, and that numerous presents, as tokens of that friendship, have been sent to them at an immense expence to the people of this country. Yet, during the whole of that time, they have been committing their robberies and cruelties; they have been carrying unoffending people into the worst of captivity. Nay, it is perfectly notorious, that Lord Sheffield, a favourite courtier, in a work published some years ago, strongly urged the great maritime powers of Europe *not to protect the American Vessels against the depredations of these very same barbarians!* This book is still in existence, and has remained to this hour without any mark of disapprobation on the part of the government. Perhaps, as such a horror seems now to be felt on account of the persons who were carried into captivity being *Christ-*

ians; perhaps, you Americans may not be regarded as Christians by our pious courtiers; and indeed I rather suppose that you are not, seeing that it is an invariable rule with them to use the words *infidel* and *republican* as synonymous. Be this as it may however, Lord Sheffield, though an old courtier when he wrote, has lived long enough to have the mortification to see you send a fleet across the Atlantic to chastise and bring down these barbarians even while they were living in a state of friendship with our government.

This event seems to have been forgotten by our hireling boasters, who attribute the first thought of such an undertaking to the English Ministry alone. "His Lordship," says the Editor of the Courier, "feels the importance of the expedition entrusted to him; he feels that it was no less a one than to chastise and put down by Christian, by British arms, the sworn enemies of the Christian faith and of the professors of it, and to 'destroy for ever,' his Lordship's expressions, 'the insufferable and horrid system of Christian slavery.' Still is it the glorious lot of this great country to act as the deliverers of mankind! After having liberated Europe from the tyranny of him who was of all religions and no religion, a Mahometan in Egypt, a Catholic in France, we have carried our arms for the same noble end, upon the same emancipating mission, to another quarter of the globe—And Africa and Europe twine each their wreath of unfading laurel and of immortal glory, round the brows of this great nation! May it be permitted to us to dwell upon this new claim to the gratitude of the world, added to those other claims which seemed scarcely to admit of increase! May it be permitted to us to recal to the recollection of our readers, that we have achieved this great work

“in the *moment of internal pressure*—
 “that we have done it at a time when
 “some of our degenerate brawlers were
 “daringly and falsely representing the
 “British nation *as lost and sunk in the*
 “*opinion of foreign nations*—her institu-
 “*tions as unworthy of being supported,*
 “and her people, suffering from distress,
 “*as unworthy of being relieved!*”

You meet with instances enough of impudent falsehood in the writings of your own Cossacks, but you very seldom witness any thing so very impudent as this. Who has ever said, that the distressed people of England are unworthy of relief? Who has ever said, that the institutions of England are unworthy of being supported? On the contrary, we are for the people receiving effectual relief; and we say, that rotten boroughs and sinecure places and standing armies in time of peace, and barracks and fortresses in the heart of our country are *not English institutions*. But mark the miserable attempt of this wretched hireling to connect this victory gained over a banditti of Turks; to connect this achievement with the internal concerns of England! Just as if the Nation could not be miserable, and even degraded in the eyes of the world, and at the same time send a fleet to batter down the walls of Algiers! These same writers represented the French nation as steeped in misery to the very lips, while its armies were making all the royal families of Europe lick the dust. And, nothing can be more true, as all history proves, than that the most wretched of slaves may be made instruments in the defeating, and even the subjugating, of other nations.

But, as to our being *deliverers*, the *deliverers of mankind*; one would have thought, that even this devoted hireling would have refrained, at this time, from the use of such a phrase. The destruction of the power of the Algerines; the chastising of these robbers and murderers,

though the act comes somewhat late, and receives no additional merit from the canting motive of a love of the Christian faith, it is an act in itself meritorious and worthy of a great nation. Why, then, was the hireling so indiscreet as to mix it up with the restoration of the Bourbons, the Pope, the Inquisition, and the infernal persecution of the Protestants in France? We have delivered France, indeed; for we have delivered her of the religious freedom which she enjoyed, and have delivered her up to a horde of vindictive nobles and priests. Before we visited her as deliverers, the protestants of that country had almost forgotten the persecutions which they and their forefathers had so long experienced under the Bourbons; but no sooner had we delivered her than those protestants again found the knife of the assassin at their throats. The sufferings of the captives in Algiers were very great, and I hope that we have put an end to them for ever. But great as they were, they did not amount, in the course of a century, to the sufferings experienced by the protestants of France, since those protestants, in common with the rest of the people, were delivered by us into the hands of the Bourbons: one single person, who is numbered amongst their ancestors, committed a greater mass of cruelty than ever was committed since the foundation of their power, by all the tyrants of the Barbary states put together. Nay, not to go back so far as the reign of the bloody Charles, who, upon being requested by his courtiers not to come too near to the putrid bodies of a heap of murdered protestants, answered, *that the smell of a dead protestant was sweet to his nostrils*; not to go back to the days of this bloody Bourbon, we have now living amongst us thousands upon thousands of the descendants of those men, who were driven out of France by the cruelties of *Louis the Fourteenth*. That despot,

amongst other acts of his cruelty, caused protestants to be shut up in their houses, their houses then to be set on fire, and those who endeavoured to escape to be flung back into the flames. Others were kept in rooms below, while by the incessant noise of kettle-drums, made over their heads day and night, they were driven to raving madness. Can my Lord Exmouth, or any one else, relate any thing so cruel, committed by the Algerines? Yet, this Louis was a *Christian* prince, and he committed these horrid deeds in the name of his religion! Let us hear no more, then, about our *deliverance of mankind*. Let us stick to this Algerine expedition, which, be the *motive* what it may, is good in itself, *because it has punished and humbled tyrants and pirates*; and not because it has done any thing for or against any religion.

When this writer was in the mode of talking about our performances as *deliverers*, bare justice to his subject required, that he should say something of what we *endeavoured to do*, as well as of what we had *done*, in this amiable capacity. He might have gone on, in this case, and added a "wreath of unfading laurel of immortal glory." For, there was the continent of *America* to be taken in! Why did he not say, then, that we did our best, or, at least, that our Government did; that it did its *very best*, to deliver **YOU** also! That it sent out its arms upon an "*emancipating mission*" to your country, and especially to *Frenchtown, Hampton, Stonington, and Alexandria*. In the *AMERICAN EXPOSITION*, republished by Mr. Clement, in the Strand, and which, like the *file*, has been found too hard even for the vipers of the *Quarterly Review* to touch; in that work this hireling might have found some details of the proceedings of this "*emancipating mission*!" Some how or other, this mission did not succeed. You were even so blind to your own interests and

happiness as not only to refuse to be delivered, but to resist the deliverers by force of arms, and actually to knock some of them on the head, and to drive others into the sea! What a perverse people! Though it was offered to you to be delivered of your President, and of your "*successful example of democratic rebellion*," without costing you a farthing. Nay, the mother opened her tender arms to receive you back into her very bosom; and still you rejected her kindness; you repaid her, not with thanks and with kisses, but with scoffs and with blows. Ungrateful people! Perverse people! Well, if you were not in the humour to be delivered at that time, you may, perhaps, if your Cossacks and your Noblesse, by the means of hypocrisy and bank paper, obtain the sway, be better disposed to receive a future "*emancipating mission*." In the mean while, I shall do my best to remind the boasters in England, that they have done but half justice to their subject, as long as they omit to mention the great and sincere efforts which were made by this government for the deliverance of America.

"*The Royal Divorce*," as our newspapers call it, and for the hearing about which I prepared *you* many months ago, is, perhaps, expected to engage so much of the public attention as to make us forget, for a while at least, the weightier matters of *Redress and Reform*. If such expectations exist, they will, however, be completely disappointed. The people, as I told you before, are not in a humour to be *amused*! Their feeling upon this subject, is, if I am any judge of it, the feeling of *curiosity* at most. If it rises above perfect *indifference* it goes no higher than the unagitating feeling of curiosity. There is no foreseeing what facts may come to light. It is possible that there may come forth something to excite feelings of a higher order than those which I have mentioned. But at present,

it appears to me, that the people in general have not the smallest disposition to interfere in any dispute that may take place between any of the branches of the royal family. And, in this respect, at any rate, I must demand from you, as an act of justice, to allow, that they act the part of a "*thinking people*." Be you, I pray, in no anxiety about old John Bull upon this score. He is not, I will assure you, at all disposed, at this present time, to play over the pretty pranks, which your and our ancestors played in the days of the *White and Red Roses*, to the disgrace of the national understanding and to the astonishment of all the rest of the civilized world. No, John will view the matter with perfect tranquility, I assure you. He will be as impartial a spectator as the parties could wish for. He will have quite enough to do to look after his own affairs, which, to prevent his utter ruin, beggary and slavery, demand his undivided attention and all the exertion, of which his muscular carcass and masculine mind are capable.

The Dissolution of the Chamber in France excites as little interest as the Royal Divorce. Amidst the dearth of intelligence our daily newspapers are

crammed with the bickerings of the parties at Paris. The greater part of these newspapers are in the pay of the one or the other. One particular paper is said to receive a regular stipend from the Bourbons, and the others appear to envy it the infamous distinction. As to any *truth* reaching us through this corrupt channel, except by mere accident, it is in vain to expect it. All that we know is, that the French people are in a wretched state of slavery, which it is the object of the government to render still more wretched, and, if possible, permanent. There seems to be no hope of the French recovering their liberties, unless a Reform take place in the English Parliament. As England has done all the mischief to freedom in Europe, so it is my opinion, if any good is to arise in this part of the world, it must be begun in England. This you will say savours a little of the John Bull boasting. However, that she has done all the mischief, I am sure you will not deny, and, whatever may be your opinion as to her capacity for doing good, I am sure you will excuse me for entertaining a sanguine hope, that she will have both the power and the disposition.

WM. COBBETT.